

**North Fork of the Big Hole River
Car Body Removal Project
Environmental Assessment Decision Notice**

**Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks
Region Three, Bozeman
September 2009**

Proposed Action

Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks (MFWP) is proposing to provide funding and implement a project to remove six old car bodies that were placed to protect the stream bank on a reach of the North Fork of the Big Hole River. After the car bodies are removed, FWP proposes to stabilize approximately 100 meters of stream bank using a rock toe, willow clumps, and sod mats. The intent of this project is to stabilize and enhance an unnatural stream bank in order to improve habitat for fluvial (river dwelling) Arctic grayling and other native and sport fish species within this reach of the North Fork. The project is located adjacent to a county bridge on the lower North Fork Road approximately 3 miles west of the town of Wisdom in Beaverhead County.

Montana Environmental Policy Act

FWP is required by the Montana Environmental Policy Act (MEPA) to assess significant potential impacts of a proposed action to the human and physical environment. In compliance with MEPA, an Environmental Assessment (EA) was completed for the proposed project by FWP and released for public comment on August 21, 2009.

Public comments on the proposed action were taken for 14 days (through September 4, 2009). The EA was mailed to 40 individuals and groups, and legal notices were printed in the *Montana Standard* (Butte, MT) and the *Dillon Tribune*. The EA was also posted on the FWP webpage: <http://fwp.mt.gov/publicnotices/>.

Summary of Public Comment

One public comment was received during the 14-day review period. The comment, received from the Anaconda Sportsmens Club was as follows “the Anaconda Sportsmen Club is in favor of the North Fork of the Big Hole River Car Body Removal Project”.

Final Environmental Assessment

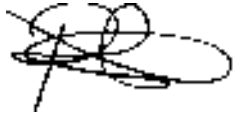
There are no modifications necessary to the Draft Environmental Assessment based on public comment. The Draft Environmental Assessment, together with this Decision Notice, will serve as the final document for this proposal.

Decision

Based on the Environmental Assessment, public comment, and the need to preserve fluvial Arctic grayling and its habitat on the North Fork of the Big Hole River, it is my decision to

proceed with the North Fork of the Big Hole River Car Body Removal Project. This project will enhance an unnatural stream bank and improve habitat for fluvial (river dwelling) Arctic grayling and other native and sport fish species on the North Fork, a tributary to the Big Hole River.

I find there to be no significant impacts on the human and physical environments associated with this project. Therefore, I conclude that the Environmental Assessment is the appropriate level of analysis, and that an Environmental Impact Statement is not required.



Patrick J. Flowers
Region Three Supervisor